In order to compensate the erosion in the real value of permanent disablement benefit and dependant benefit pensions, enhancements based on the rise in the cost of living index have been granted with effect from 1.8.97. The minimum rate of sickness benefit has been enhanced from Rs. 2.50 per day to Rs. 14.00 per day with effect from 19.9.98. An action plan for modernising ESI hospitals and dispensaries at a total cost of Rs. 60.00 crore has been formulated and circulated among the State Governments for implementation in consultation with the ESIC.

Complaint against CPWD/Estate Office in Consumer Court

*305. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an allottee of Government accommodation, who is paying (i) Licence Fee (ii) not getting House Rent Allowance (iii) and making payments as per order No. 11014/22/90-w-3 dated the 5th January 1998, (Ministry of Urban Affairs) for additions and alterations in the accommodation, can file a complaint in a Consumer Court, if there is deficiency in the services rendered by the CPWD/Estate Officer, under Consumer Protection Act, 1986;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) The laws of the land do not forbid any person from filing any complaint in any Court including the Consumer Disputes Redressal Agencies. However, it is for the Court to decide the admissibility of the complaint. This Ministry can not and is not expected to provide legal opinions on hypothetical cases.

Closure of PSUs

*309. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a newsitem "Centre to close down 11 PSUs; Bakht" published in the 'Statesman' dated the 26 November, 1998;

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereto;

(c) the number of PSUs proposed to be disinvested to less than fifty percent of Government equity;

(d) the number of PSUs under reference to BIFR;

(e) the number of PSUs referred to Disinvestment Commission so far; and

(f) the names of PSUs considered to be strategic by Government?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) Govt. has taken a decision to extend benefits of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) to employees of following unviable Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) of the Department of Heavy Industry (DHI) which are facing the prospect of winding up.

S. NO.	Name of the PSU	No. of employees	Status
1.	National Instruments Ltd. (NIL)	863	Prima-facie conclusion by BIFR for winding up
2.	Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd. (BOGL)	472	Prima-facie conclusion by BIFR for winding up.
3.	Weighbird India Ltd. (WIL)	183	Final decision by BIFR for winding up.